

James Leggett's. Donum Reutoris
St. Paul's MANNER OF PREACHING,

RECOMMENDED FOR
IMITATION, 13.

IN A

SERMON

DELIVERED AT THE
ORDINATION

OF THE

REV. DANIEL HALL

TO THE PASTORAL CARE OF THE CHURCH IN
SAG-HARBOR, LONG-ISLAND:

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A Sermon, &c.

I. COR. II. 4.

And my speech, and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom: but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power.

AMONG human characters we shall find but very few, who make nearer approaches to the example of our Lord, than the writer of this epistle. Soon after it pleased the God of all grace to reveal his Son in him, we find he was *caught up to the third Heavens* and there, he tells us *he heard words which were unspeakable and unlawful for man to utter.* From other hints in his history, it appears, that visions, revelations, and a prophetic spirit were frequent with him, and through the whole of his life after his conversion, he possessed an uncommon share of that grace which is common to all christians, and in no accomplishment did he come short of the very chiefest apostle.—Thus educated by communion with God in divine things, and the Holy Spirit giving energy to his natural gifts, it is not surprising we should find that seraphic zeal, fervent affection, and superior exertion, which were so distinguished in the life of this apostle, and advanced him so near the standard of perfection, the example of Christ.—Well may we therefore pay great attention to the conduct of this illustrious character, that we may copy his manner both in spirit and exertion, and follow him wherein he followed Christ.—But in no case is his example more worthy the imitation of all who are called to a similar employment, than his manner of communicating the truths of the gospel.—Of this he
has

has given us a hint in the text.—After suggesting to his brethren the manner of his coming among them, which was not with excellency of speech, or wisdom declaring unto them the testimony of God, as he determined to know nothing among them, save Jesus Christ and him crucified, and was with them in weakness, and fear, and much trembling: He added as in the text—“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom: but in demonstration of the spirit and of power.”—

This manner at first view, must strike our minds as highly excellent, and worthy of imitation, as it leaves out in general, whatever is unsuitable to so important a work as preaching the gospel, and comprises whatever may give weight, and force to the pure precepts of truth.—It shall be our business therefore on the present occasion to illustrate three particulars.

I. The manner which the apostle disowned as forming any part of his preaching (viz.) “Enticing words of man’s wisdom.”

II. The manner which he claimed as his own practice, expressed in the words “In demonstration of the spirit and of power.” And

III. Why he preferred this latter mode.

After attending to these proposals severally, shall close with a few motives to an imitation of so worthy an example.

I. It is proposed to illustrate the manner which the apostle disowned as forming any part of his preaching (viz.) enticing words of man’s wisdom—Said he “*My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom.*” Words of this description may be understood to mean such as are ensnaring, subtle, flowery, brilliant, or facinating; or any others which directly or indirectly draw off the minds of an auditory from the plain truths of the gospel, and fix them on something else. Such words as these are enticing.—At the period in which the apostle lived, there was an order of men scattered throughout

out Rome, Athens, and Corinth called sophists—they were renowned for their subtilty in reasoning, and drawing off the mind from any maxims, in which it had been established. They succeeded by an artful, insinuating address, and fallacious appearance of argument. This manner after the spread of christianity, was found no less alluring to the people at large, than subservient to the carnal, selfish ends of false teachers. They adopted it as best calculated to promote their private interest, reputation, or ease. In preaching what they wished to palm upon the world as gospel, they mingled *this science falsely so called*, and by enticing words of their own wisdom drew off the minds of their hearers from the truth, as it is in Jesus, and fixed them on other objects.—Said the Apostle “They that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly and by good words, and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple.”—This manner ever since the apostle’s time has been practised by such, as through ignorance or rashness, have obtruded themselves into the ministry, *without ever being called of God, or even knowing in the least degree the power of Godliness upon their hearts.* To convey the most clear idea of this manner, it may be necessary to adduce a few cases in which it is most commonly displayed.—and

1st. When the internal views of the preacher are to advance his own private interest, then his words are prone to be enticing, least he should offend such, as are unsanctified among his opulent and influential friends and hereby endanger his worldly circumstances.

Whatever *ostensible motives natural men may exhibit* as their inducements to preach the gospel, yet, the *real ones* which actuate their hearts and govern their conduct are *strictly selfish*: and their selfishness and carnal wisdom, *will bear sway*, and form the most prominent features in their manner of preaching. In this case therefore the preacher’s own feelings and wisdom will teach him to “prophecy smooth things.”

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To preach merely such moral duties as all men approve—which admit of no dispute—are good for civil society, and tend to promote good order. This is a pleasing alluring manner. He is very sensible, that the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel, delivered pointedly and pressed according to their infinite importance give great uneasiness to the consciences of the wicked : hence in general, he considers it, the most *prudent way*, either to pass over them *wholly*, or describe them *so faintly*, that few or none will apprehend his meaning—This manner is enticing, as it diverts the minds of men from the essentials of salvation, and amuses them with *such doings*, as are wholly deceitful considered as a title to Heaven.—It is enticing as it implies that those moral virtues taught by heathen moralists answer men's duty to God, and receive this sanction from his word.—It is enticing also, as those virtues suit precisely *the improved selfish feelings* of all natural men : are heard with pleasure by moral hypocrites and tend directly to settle them more and more upon their lees, and confirm them in the habits of self-righteousness—Their consciences grow more seared ; they feel whole, and are “ alive without the law.”—Preachers who are thus calculating to serve themselves, and by *good words and fair speeches*, keep in perfect peace with their ungodly parishioners, treat the cardinal doctrines of the gospel as dangerous. Their maxims of carnal policy are *Suit the times, Please the people*, and keep the *Peace inviolably*.—They really feel, that to preach the law of God in its nature and obligations ; to define the nature of holiness, and sin, and exhibit them *plainly without disguise*, and their eternal consequences, would certainly give offence—censure would ensue—imprudence be charged upon them, and they should suffer by it.—They *really feel* that should they exhibit plainly without disguise the sovereignty of God, the total depravity of the human heart, regeneration, adoption, and sanctification, and the necessity of an holy life, and press them pointedly,

ly, it would plant arrows of conviction, or excite uneasiness and disgust in the minds of their hearers. Their carnal wisdom therefore teaches them, it would be *shockingly imprudent* to hazard such preaching. Hence, when any of these doctrines come in their way, they lavish their enticing words, to render them obscure, unintelligible or doubtful.—Their system of carnal prudence forbids that they should express them pointedly, and dwell upon them plainly. But when their discourse, or the complaints of the pious compel them to say something about them, they will do it by way of distant allusions: and be careful to express the doctrine in view so faintly, that the most critical can but just discern their meaning, and the feeble mind is wholly bewildered and lost. Words of doubtful significations, long circumlocutions, and subtle suggestions are introduced to sheathe such points of gospel truth, as are most likely to penetrate and rouse the consciences of the wicked. Instead of awakening and rousing the supine sinner, their business is to keep him secure, and flatter him that his moral virtues are pleasing and acceptable to God.—Such preachers deem it imprudent to let the plain truths of the gospel, beam upon men's consciences in their full strength.—They think that the decrees of God—the total depravity of the human heart—regeneration by the Holy Ghost—and eternal punishment are such *swords of the Spirit*, that they will *do hurt*, if they are not kept safely lodged in thick scabbards of enticing words.—They never can be induced to be explicit on these points, or act in any degree as if they *really believed* them: But they will talk around about them with much plausibility—keep their own opinions out of sight, by telling those of other men, and loose their hearers in a wilderness of general observations.

Others again, whose ultimate end in preaching is to enjoy life, free from the tumults of other occupations, are ever enticing in their manner. A deep sense of their personal ease fills them with the utmost aversion

aversion to speaking plain on any subject. They combat no false doctrines—they keep clear of disputes—their charity has no limits—they reprove no sin or sinners so as to be understood—they speak against foreign vices, such as their hearers have no concern in—*discipline* they shun like a pestilence—and sacrifice every *spiritual interest* to *keeping the peace*. Their fear of man, arising from a fear of being disturbed, utterly forbids a pointed word or animated sentence—their lukewarm morality serves but as an opiate to conscience, and to lull into security every natural feeling of the human heart. Their carnal wisdom powerfully impresses it upon them, that in order to do good, *Mankind must be taken as they are, and allured to courses of virtue, without disturbing their propensities to vice.** Little considering that the very nature of the case renders such a proceeding absolutely impossible. So long as the heart of every natural man is enmity against God, it is at war with every truth of God rightly understood. How can such truths therefore allure? No, such preachers are obliged to entice, and allure by preaching some other gospel, in order to practice upon their own plan. And hence they serve not our Lord Jesus Christ but their own interest, and are a dead weight on his cause. As a reason for this impious moral intriguing, they insinuate that the people cannot bear undisguised plainness—they will turn insane—raise persecution—embroil society in endless disputes and parties—and in short, the light in the candlestick must be removed or extinguished.—The most eagle-eyed prudence therefore must guard against such calamities, and not endanger their worldly comforts or the public peace by preaching the distinguishing doctrines of salvation.

2dly. This manner is also adopted when the views of the preacher centre in the acquisition of fame.

A reputation

* “ Their honors well he knew would ne’er be driven;
But hop’d they still would please to go to Heaven.”

Triumph of Infidelity.

A reputation for learning, eloquence, or argumentation, may engage his talents: either of which afford abundant opportunities for enticements.—

A profusion of learned criticism on familiar subjects, tends to obscure and weaken their force on the mind. Some whose ambition flourishes here, can hardly content themselves without exhibiting the various opinions of past ages, on any subject on which they may occasionally treat. And all this apparently for no other design, than to publish their *extensive information*. While they are *curiously investigating* the meaning of words in different languages, and exploring the ideas of the Fathers, the hearers are enticed from the truth, and prepared only to admire the *erudition* of the speaker.—Others, whose taste for eloquence stimulates their exertions, will dress up the doctrines of the gospel, or moral truths, in rhetorical flourishes, gaudy figures of speech, high sounding words, or artificially smooth periods.—It will be apparent that their carnal wisdom, *dictated* their subject *in retirement*—guided in making their sermon—directed to the choice of words, figures, and pronunciation.—It will appear that they internally aimed at praise: and meant to *dazzle, and entice* the minds of the multitude to *admire themselves*, rather than *feel the weight and power of truth*. §

Many, whose hearts are set upon acquiring this *incense of applause* shew it in the laborious pains they take to adorn their stile: and make their discourses shine, with the most *elegant words, phrases, and rounded periods*. Their feelings flow in the elegancies of their diction, composition, and speaking. And

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§ "What! will a man play tricks—
Or will he seek to dazzle me with tropes,
As with the diamond on his lily hand,
And play his brilliant parts before my eyes
When I am hungry for the bread of life?
He mocks his Maker, and prostitutes and shames
His noble office, and instead of truth
Displaying his own beauty, starves his flock."

C—.

when these are performed well, they *congratulate themselves* for having *preached well*. But nothing wounds their feelings, and makes them blush *so much as a rough word—an inharmonious sentence—or a lapse in grammar!* They feel as if their *very character* was materially *injured* upon such an occurrence. For they conceive that the world, and men of taste, *despise a preacher*, who utters *plain words and sentences*. Their carnal wisdom therefore teaches them, it is a matter of the *first importance* in support of their ministerial dignity, to compose their discourses with the utmost *correctness and polish*—and utter them with the *graces of elocution*. This, promises they seem to say, *unfading laurels of praise, and commendation* from the people.—In the use of this enticing manner multitudes are charmed from the truth, and perfectly unable to calculate on any benefit, except being pleased and delighted at the time of hearing. This manner, gives opportunity, to please the vitiated tastes of natural men—to flatter them in their *moral virtues*, though utterly destitute of *holiness*; and *moral declaimers* upon divine subjects *improve it for this end*. They chuse to entertain their hearers with fine speculations in praise of *virtue undefined*, and dispraise of *vice undefined*—with historic relations and anecdotes—and set them off with the beauties of rhetoric. If such preachers can only hear their fine discourses praised, how are they gratified? If they can only hear it whispered *what excellent preachers they are*, although from the *most ignorant*, their very souls leap for joy! || Such preachers can spend their lives in the business, and not feel their

|| “Praise from the rivet’d lips of toothless, bald
Decrepitude; and in the looks of lean
And craving poverty; and in the bow
Respectful of the smutch’d artificer,
Is oft *too welcome*. How much more
Pour’d forth by beauty splendid and polite,
In language soft as adoration breathes?
Ah, spare your idol!” C——.

their hearts wounded and grieved at having no success, in awakening and converting sinners. They live upon the *incense* of approbation they receive from men. This, encourages them to continue in the business of *enticing*, and although the cause of the Redeemer may *languish and die* before their eyes, still they have no *tears to shed*, or prayers to pour out for its revival.—

Nearly allied to this class likewise, are those whose ambition prompts them to shew their talents for argumentation, and the establishment of some favorite scheme of religion. To entice from the commonly received doctrines of Calvinism, and bend the scriptures to their plan, and make it appear plausible, how much *art, sophistry, and cunning are used*? Preachers of this sort find it *highly* for their advantage to draw their arguments from the *roots of dead languages, and the depraved feelings of human nature*. In the former, they cannot be detected by the common people—in the latter they are quite agreed.—The preacher who can *speciously* establish by argument, *against the face* of scripture, that the mysteries of salvation are not to be believed, or that there is *no wrath ultimately* to be feared by the ungodly, shews at once his *masterly talents* for reasoning, and his love for the peace, and felicity of mankind.—Such preachers can put darkness for light, and light for darkness and give them a blush of truth—can disjoint sentences, and extract their meaning, and join them together again, in any distortion which may suit their purpose.—He who changes himself into an angel of light, no doubt assists them to make the *sweet delusion shine*. Their own wisdom above every other guide teaches them, this is the way to do good to society, to the souls and bodies of men.—In what a multitude of forms does this speech, and preaching with enticing words of man's wisdom appear?

What has been said may just serve as the outlines of that manner, which the apostle utterly disowned

as forming any part of his preaching—and leads us to consider as proposed in the

II. Place, the manner which he claimed as his own practice expressed in the words, “In demonstration of the spirit and of power.”—Said he, *And my speech, and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power.*

To exhibit this manner, in all its propriety, beauty and force, would need the apostle himself to stand before you. Indeed, to enter into a compass of particulars which seem necessary to it, and promise justice to their illustration, would be too much for any man. What is to follow, will consist merely in presenting to view a few things implied in exhibiting the truths of the gospel, in the manner hinted by our apostle.—

The holy spirit of God by whom all divine truths have been revealed, is in his nature absolutely *simple*, uncompounded of any thing not essential to him. He is *pure*, infinitely removed from all sin or error—*plain*, unobscured by disguise, artifice, or deceit—*searching*, pervading all things—*exalted*, infinitely above the wisdom or correction of creatures—*ardent*, in pursuing the glory of God, and the best good of his kingdom—and *powerful*, in all his operations. This holy spirit has left the image of these perfections, as well as many others, on the law and gospel of God, which he has revealed. To preach the gospel therefore, so as that the spirit of God should be *seen, manifested and proved*, is to preach it *simply*, in its true nature, uncompounded of any thing contrary to it—to preach it *purely*, free from corruption or error—*plainly*, so that every mind may apprehend it—*searchingly*, so as to reach the heart and conscience—*boldly*, above the fear or correction of carnal wisdom—*ardently*, feeling its excellence and importance—and *efficaciously*, being attended with divine influence in renewing men’s souls.

To preach the gospel in this manner is to preach it, *in demonstration of the spirit and of power.* That
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this was the manner claimed by the apostle as his practice will appear from hints and examples left on sacred record, of the particulars just mentioned.—and

1st. He preached the truths of the gospel simply, unmixed with any thing contrary to them. Said he to his christian friends at Galatia “I certify you brethren that the gospel which was preached of me, is not *after man*, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” The gospel which the apostle preached he affirms was *not after man*, that is, according to man’s depraved nature, wisdom, and feelings: but it was holy, like the law of God, to which the natural hearts of men are not subject. This gospel he did not receive from man, but from the teaching of Christ’s spirit.—In preaching it therefore he delivered its doctrines in their simplicity as impressed upon his mind by the Holy Ghost—He exhibited Christ’s character as divine, his offices, his atonement, his resurrection and ascension, and the whole counsel of God in their simplicity, unmixed with human inventions. And hereby demonstrated the very spirit, whose image these doctrines bear.—Through the whole of divine revelation, this simplicity is manifested; which is a kind of divine impressure, denoting *the truth, dignity, and property of the Deity*—This impressure stamped the apostle’s doctrine as divine.—

2dly. Purity from error attended his simplicity of doctrine.—No person could be more guarded against every species of false religion. “I marvel;” said he likewise to his Galatian brethren; “that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the gospel of Christ, unto another gospel, which is not another, but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.—But *though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other gospel, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.* As we said before, so say I now again, if *any man* preach any other gospel unto you than that

that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet please men I should not be the servant of Christ." Penetrated with the importance of preserving the gospel pure from all possible error or corruption, he abhorred the idea of the brethren's admitting the least deviation from the truths they had already received, on any pretence whatever. Although the apostles themselves, or an angel from heaven, or any man should pretend they had some new discoveries better, or more worthy their attention, they were to *let them all be accursed*. But fully conscious of his own integrity he asks "Do I seek to please men," that is, "is it my manner as some would insinuate to ingratiate myself into the good opinions of carnal men, by altering the doctrines of the gospel so as to please their *depraved humors and feelings*? Let all men judge of my conduct. So far from this, *I affirm if I yet please men, if my preaching pleases the depraved feelings of mankind I am not the servant of Christ*. Instead of persuading God, or endeavoring to reduce his truth to men's wishes; which is a shocking idea; my whole business is to persuade men to be reconciled to God." He could hardly speak with sufficient detestation of the idea that he endeavored to please men in their sins—he was perfectly sensible, he could not be the servant of Christ, any further than he exhibited his truth, unadulterated with human additions. The purity of the truths he delivered therefore demonstrated the Spirit by whom they were dictated.

3dly. Plainness also distinguished the manner of our apostle. Said he "I brethren when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of man's wisdom declaring unto you the testimony of God, for I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." His words, utterance, and actions, were only *the images of the truths he delivered*. Every mind saw the very ob-
jects

jects he described : Being occupied and affected with these, they thought nothing of the speaker. The most perfect simplicity of stile ran through all his delineations of gospel doctrines. When it is said by a brother apostle " that there were some things in his epistles, hard to be understood which the unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction." It is not to be understood, that those things were rendered hard by the obscurity, subtilty, or disguise, in which he delivered them, but they were hard through the sublimity of the subjects upon which he treated. When he published the gospel abroad among the gentiles, or edified his brethren in settled churches, he dared not to preach in that flowery, brilliant stile, adopted by false teachers, or the sophist of his day, whose object was to *display themselves*. He dared not disguise and blur the testimony of God, by shewing his skill in oratory, or fine composition, or making himself admired for his gifts—He feared to disguise gospel doctrines by enticing words of man's wisdom : he knew that his own soul must pay for such perfidy. Said he, " As we were allowed of God, to be put in trust with the gospel, *even so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who trieth our hearts ; for neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know—nor a cloke of covetousness God is witness—Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others.*" It never was apparent that sometimes his words were shaped to please the carnal tastes of his hearers, as a cloke of covetousness to gain their worldly interest ; and at another to command their applause. His very soul *detested that downy preaching which sews pillows to all armholes, and barter Heaven, the blood of Christ, the souls of men and the glory of God, for the empty puffs of human approbation.* On the other hand, he loved the truth—he loved his God and Savior—he loved the souls of men, and dealt out the bread of life, in the plainest manner, and " longed for all his hearers in the bowels of Jesus Christ."

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He determined to know nothing among any people, but *Christ Jesus and him crucified*. In illustrating Christ's person, offices, and crucifixion, and the infinitely weighty truths connected with them, he had no use for excellency of speech or carnal wisdom. These were utterly unsuitable here. Simplicity, solemnity, and ardor, were the only ornaments admissible. Said he "We have received not the spirit of this world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God—which things also, we speak not in the words *which man's wisdom teacheth*, but which the *Holy Ghost teacheth*, comparing spiritual things with spiritual"—He had not received the spirit of this world, but the spirit which is of God, and his very words in which he expressed the truths of the gospel were dictated to him by the Holy Ghost. Man's depraved wisdom had no predominant sway over him, but his plainness was in demonstration of the Spirit of God.

4thly. This plainness gave him opportunity to approach the consciences of men.—It is said of all the apostles "That they possessed a power, almost irresistible, to send truth and conviction into the heart." The pointedness and power, with which they often spake, proved that their assistance was divine—When our apostle "Reasoned before Felix, of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come" and directed these solemn truths to his conscience, *How, he trembled!* Did he not see himself transferred to the bar of God, arraigned, convicted, and condemned? Did he not plainly see the justice of God's eternal wrath against such sinners? No doubt—How then could he but tremble! This pointed manner of address and application of the weighty truths of God's word to his conscience penetrated his *hardened soul*, and *compelled him to feel*.—Before King Agrippa likewise the apostle had opportunity to display the power of the gospel in his own conversion: and after rehearsing the circumstances of it, addressed himself

himself to the king saying, "King Agrippa believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest"—To which he replied—"Paul, almost thou *persuadest me to be a christian*" How powerful was this pointed address?—To a large body of Jews, and Fathers of the nation at Rome, the apostle expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the Prophets from *morning till evening*. And when they were not agreed among themselves, and about to depart he addressed them and said "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the Prophet unto our fathers saying, Go unto this people, and say, hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them. *Be it known therefore unto you, that the Salvation of God, is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.* When he had said these words, the Jews departed and had *great reasonings among themselves.*" Instances are numerous in which his pointed addresses to mens hearts are illustrated, and the mighty effects which followed. Instead of endeavoring to hide the truths of the gospel and make them sit easy upon the consciences of the wicked, like false teachers, it was his chief design, to exhibit them in their *native brightness*, and direct them with all their force to the hearts of his auditory, and disturb with cutting conviction, the most stupid sinner. He had no idea that divine truth was dangerous—Instead of being *afraid* that mankind should *see their awful condition*, and become troublesome, he endeavored with *all his powers* to let them see and feel their *ruin and danger*—He knew that the "word of the Lord was quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of

the soul and spirit : and of the joints and marrow, *and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*—He was taught this by the Holy Ghost : and his design was if possible, to let this word of God, have its *full force* upon the hearts of his hearers, according to their situations. He was not afraid of consequences. His selfishness, was *extinguished* in his love for Christ and the souls of men. For this reason he dared to give the truths of the gospel their *point, and their edge*, and press the consciences of men with all his *skill and strength*.

5thly. His boldness, and undaunted resolution in preaching the gospel likewise marked his manner.—Before Kings, Governors, and chief Captains, Jewish courts, and every instrument of persecution and torture, he spoke with freedom and energy. When arraigned before Nero the Roman Emperor ; that monster of savage barbarity ; Said the apostle “ At my first answer, no man stood with me : but all men forsook me ; I pray God, that it might not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, that by me *the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear* : and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.” While even friends forsook him through fear ; and surrounded with enemies who thirsted for his blood ; and wholly uncertain how his trial would turn, either in life or death—even here, strengthened by his Lord, he let the preaching of the gospel be *fully known, so that all the Gentiles might hear*. Borne up with a sense of duty to his great Lord, and Master, in the discharge of his commission to the gentiles, *he feared not the face of man* : nor suffered his feelings or utterance to be daunted by the prospect of death, in all its horrors.—Like the Holy Spirit, by whom he was inspired, he possessed a magnanimity of soul, an holy elevation, infinitely above the vengeance of a world—This elevation was conspicuous not only in his preaching, and scenes of danger in every place, but

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it pervades all his writings in the sacred volume. It could not be told by his stile or manner, that he ever suspected there were such a race of beings as *critics*, or that the truths he delivered were liable to injury or abuse. *The dignity of the word of God and its importance filled his soul, and he thought of nothing else* —But,

6thly. The ardor with which he pursued the objects of his ministry further illustrates his manner. His heart being filled with love to Christ, the souls of men, and the glory of God, he preached, agonized, and suffered in the fervor of this love, and let no worldly concerns divert him from the objects of it. Said he “What things were gain to me once, these I count loss for Christ—yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ.” The loss of all temporal goods, worldly honor, and ease, were not worth mentioning when put in competition with Christ. He counted them all *but dross and dirt*. This singleness of affection for his Lord, made him preach with the *ardor* of a seraph. To dwell upon the glories of Christ’s divinity, his offices, and atonement, and their blessed consequences in the salvation of *lost men who repent*, was the richest feast of his soul. On the other hand, he agonized, and sometimes lengthened out his speech till break of day, in persuading miserable sinners to be reconciled to God. Said he to the Elders of Ephesus “Ye know from the first day I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons. Serving the Lord with all humility, and with many tears and temptations which beset me; and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, and have taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; and remember, that by the space of *three years*

years I ceased not to warn every one, night and day with tears. This shewed the ardor with which he persuaded and entreated perishing souls to come to Christ. And "Now, says he, I go bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things which shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, that bonds, and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God." After rehearsing the manner in which he had labored among them, his soul anticipated the trials he was about to endure at Jerusalem. But no sooner are they mentioned, than his zeal and fortitude burst forth in an holy triumph, *but none of these things move me!* like the rock in the midst of the ocean, against which the billows beat and dash, but cannot move. And when his brethren at Cesaria would dissuade him from his purpose of going to Jerusalem he replied, "What mean ye, to weep and break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of Jesus."—These instances in which the warmth of his heart led him to express the truths of the gospel, and pursue the glory of his Lord in building up his cause, are above comment. His very soul glowed with that spirit of truth and love, which he demonstrated in every discourse, and he pursued his object till he laid down his life in the cause.—

Finally. His manner of preaching in demonstration of the Spirit was also attended with the power of God in renewing men's souls and preparing them for Heaven. Said he, to his Corinthian brethren "Though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." And again "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us—written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living

living God—not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.” The power of the Holy Ghost accompanied the truths preached, and caused them to spring forth in an harvest of souls.—God was pleased signally to own and bless the apostle’s ministrations of divine truth for the *great end* of preaching, and hereby he *demonstrated the power* of the holy Spirit in the actual salvation of multitudes. This manner in all its branches, the apostle claimed as his *own practice*, in distinction from that of false teachers. *Said he*, “my speech, and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.”—It was proposed in the

III. Place to shew why the apostle preferred this latter mode. The reason given to the brethren in the context is, “That their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”—That is, he preached the gospel *simply, purely, plainly, pointedly, boldly, and ardently*, that their faith in Christ, might not rest, in the reasonings and persuasions of *carnal wisdom*, but should be the effect of the power of God, *attending a manifestation* of his truth. A faith which has its origin *here* is genuine. It will always be strengthened by the pure doctrines of christianity—will work by love—overcome the world—and live, till heaven opens on the soul. But *every faith* which stands in the wisdom of men, or is grounded in *human persuasion*, will *die* like the meteor, which flashes but for a moment.—It only remains that the above example, be recommended to our imitation by the following motives.—And

1st. The motive which the apostle himself acknowledged as influential on him, must be striking, and coercive on *all* who are engaged in a similar employment. Why is the gospel published *at all*, except it is to be heard; so that mankind may be impressed by it, and believe it to their salvation? But if this is the design of its publication, then it

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is plainly the duty of every one to whom it is committed, to publish it *in demonstration of the spirit and of power*. Men's faith cannot stand in the power of God, unless this power produce it. And the apostle intimated we have no right to expect this power to attend where the spirit of truth is not exhibited. Consequently unless those who pretend to preach the gospel, do it after the manner of the apostle, they may as well cease from their labors. For the very design of their preaching is defeated.—Unless that particular mode be adopted which God has enjoined, and which he will own and succeed by affording the operations of his holy Spirit, it is in vain to attempt to preach: nay, for persons designedly to deviate from this manner, through the influence of their own *carnal wisdom*, thinking that they are competent to make *improvements upon God's plan*, is *horred trifling with sacred things*; and destructive to the highest interests of men's souls. How powerful therefore is this motive to enforce an imitation of the apostle.

2d. The example of Christ is a motive to it. Did not our Lord himself set the pattern before the apostle? "Never man spake like" him. How perfectly he understood his Father's will? In him was "Hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." He possessed the Holy Spirit without measure. His words were *spirit and life*. How simply and purely did he communicate the truth—how plainly to the reception of every mind—how pointedly and pungently to the heart? He never missed his design. He ever knew the secret recesses of the soul, and when he directed a sentence to the conscience, it was irresistible. The Scribes and Pharisees, the young moralist and every hypocrite, were witnesses of this. How he agonized in preaching and prayer for his sheep—how *undaunted* all his conduct? zeal and love for his father's glory filled his heart. The power of the Holy Ghost ever attended his word, and all whom the Father had given him he irresistably

irresistably drew. How infinitely forcible is this example to stimulate all his Ambassadors to an imitation of it. The apostle Paul felt its impulse in every faculty, and *his sensibility* was but the *duty* of every servant of the Lord Jesus.

3dly. The rules of God's word, enjoin this manner. "Go preach the preaching I bid thee." How can the disciple deviate from this command, *in matter or manner*? "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light, and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house tops, And fear not them that kill the body"—Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine—"Make full proof of thy ministry—give thyself wholly to these things—Take heed unto thyself, and unto thy doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this, thou shalt save thyself and them that hear thee." It is impossible to be a minister of Christ without putting these rules in practice in some good degree. And this is following our apostle wherein he followed Christ.

4thly. To imitate his example is the only method which is suitable to the great doctrines of the gospel—such as the character and offices of the adorable Trinity—the laws of God—the death of Christ—his resurrection and ascension—the lost state of man—eternal happiness and interminable misery. It is absolutely necessary for preachers who pretend to believe these doctrines, and would keep up any consistency between their belief and practice, that they follow the apostle and preach these doctrines, as he did, according to their gifts, *in demonstration of the spirit and of power*. Ministers of the gospel are called in some sense to stand in the light, "even as God is in the light." They stand in the presence of God, and of Christ *always*, and in the presence of his word. Their faces ought to shine, as the face of Moses when he descended from the mount; and express in all their conversation the unction of the Holy Spirit. And as they are called likewise to
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lay open to their fellow sinners the most solemn—the most awful, and joyful truths respecting the righteous and wicked, through eternity : How essential is it to consistency that they should do *this*, in the simplicity and demonstration of God's Spirit ? Preachers who can pass over these solemn subjects, and amuse their hearers with cold concise speculations on mere morality—who can trifle with the doctrines of salvation—preach with enticing words of man's wisdom—live on the honors which come from men, *and cry peace peace to the wicked*, give the lie to their bible. There is such an utter inconsistency between such a method of preaching and a realizing belief of the scriptures, that every awakened conscience proclaims, that they are unbelievers. Their professions of belief, and deceitful handling of divine things only render their *hypocrisy* more *hateful* in the sight of God and men. Such preachers under all their pretended *humanity*, and *tenderness* for men's feelings, *when viewed in the light of eternity*, appear more cruel than the tyger, and as destitute of gospel tenderness as the old serpent who deceives them. §

5thly. Doth not the conviction of sinners—the edification of the body of Christ—and the glory of
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§ “Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
 Were he on earth, would hear, approve and own,
 Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
 His master strokes, and draw from his design.
 I would express him *simple, grave, sincere ;*
 In *doctrine uncorrupt ;* in *language plain ;*
 And *plain in manner. Decent, solemn, chaste,*
 And *natural in gesture. Much impress'd*
Himself, as conscious of his *awful charge*,
 And anxious mainly, that the flock he feeds
 May feel it too.—

Behold the picture !—Is it like ? *Like whom*
 The things that mount the rostrum with a *ship*
 And then *skip* down again. *Pronounce a text,*
Cry, hem ; and reading—
Just fifteen minutes, Huddle up their work,
 And with a *well bred whisper* close the scene.”

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God require this imitation of the great apostle? Most certainly they do. Will the naturally proud, blind, and callous hearts of sinners ever be convicted of their sin, by the *soft insinuations of moral advice*? Will they ever be convicted that they are condemned already, and stand on the brink of eternal ruin, by setting before them the *surface* of gospel duties? *No.* In order to promise the least benefit, they must be *arrested* with the *pointed truths* of the law and gospel, and their hearts and consciences pressed with these in demonstration of the spirit and power.— Will the body of Christ receive nourishment, from the preaching of the gospel with enticing words of man's wisdom? will the *graces* of the christian flourish, and send forth their *pleasant perfumes*, by philosophic, oratorical or merely speculative representations of divine truths? *No.* Will the ever blessed God consider himself *glorified by such preaching*? The very question *excites abhorrence*. Nothing but the purity of divine truth, *can honor God*, or nourish the graces in his children which his *own breath has inspired*. And what can be added further. Doth not a quiet conscience, peace in a dying hour, and a safe account at the bar of God, demand an imitation of the example in view? Verily they do. How infinite are the motives which stand before us, and urge to this duty?—This subject therefore naturally addresses itself to those present to whom God has committed in charge the preaching of his word.—

It calls up our attention *Rev. Fathers and Brethren* to the manner in which we fulfill our ministry.— Which of the modes described by the apostle do we practice? Are we secretly moved in our preaching by an *ultimate view* to our temporal interest, honor, or ease? Do we consider it of supreme importance to be *so prudent*, or so carnally wise, *as not to disturb unbelievers*? especially our *opulent, unsanctified hearers*? If we speak what our consciences dictate as truth, yet, do we not designedly speak it in such a *guarded way*, that its edge shall not be felt by *those*

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who love it not? Said our Lord "*The world cannot receive the spirit of truth: they hate the light neither come they to the light.*" Yet, do we not designedly express the truth so *coolly, cautiously or obscurely*, that the world shall receive it and *shall not hate the light?* Such attempts no doubt are performed with enticing words of man's wisdom. Such a mode is in fact, to *adulterate the truth so much* as that a *corrupt taste* is not disgusted with it. Further, do we not endeavor to escape censure by preaching in such *general, or equivocal terms*, as may suit *all kinds of religious sentiments?* May not our minds be aspiring after the fame of Philosophers, great orators, or elegant composuists? Are we not generally much more motified, in not acquiring the applauses of men, than not honoring Christ? If these things predominate in our hearts and practice, *is it not clear* that we have been following our own wisdom; and hereby prevented the faith of many standing in the power of God? And is it possible in this case, to escape being guilty of the blood of souls? And if God is to try our hearts, and avenge such blood upon unfaithful watchmen, to all eternity, then, these queries cannot be thought unsuitable by all, who *believe and feel this solemn truth.* How can the unfaithful messenger of Christ *meet his eye* at the judgment day? when all his deceitful handlings of his word are set before him! How can he meet the souls whom he has ruined, in the regions of the damned? Imagination cannot paint the horror of such Judases—*such castaways from God.* And then to look forward, it is the Hell of hell, to consider, that these horrors will never cease. Do not our souls shudder in view of the fearful scene? and cry "*Lord Jesus, Saviour of sinners, save us from this practice, and this end.*" On the other hand, can we claim as our apostle, that our manner of exhibiting divine truth is in demonstration of the spirit and of power? Does Christ fill our hearts, and fill our discourses? Doth the love we bear to him and his truth extinguish every idea of preaching ourselves?

ourselves? Amidst the great objects of the gospel and eternity, do our own interests appear less than nothing? And do those immense objects so entirely absorb our attention and feelings that we are ready to lay down our lives for their promotion? Do we lay open to our hearers without *disguise the badness of their hearts*—their positive guilt and danger while impenitent? Do we utter forth the words of life in their simplicity, purity, plainness, pungency and power? If so, we are following in our degree the example of Christ and his apostles. Let us be exhorted to persevere. Let us warn every man and exhort every man *with tears*. O that there might be a sacred harmony between our preaching and practice. Let us not fear them that kill the body or *speak as pleasing men, but God who trieth our hearts*. Then we may look forward with comfort. The word administered by us will give opportunity for the faith of God's children to stand in the power of God. Unbelievers will have no cloke for their sin—and when we come to the close of our labors, we may with the holy apostle look back with the testimony of a good conscience and say, "We have fought a good fight, we have finished our course—we have kept the faith, and henceforth there is laid up for us, a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge, shall give us at that day." And shall receive from his lips the joyful sentence "Well done, good and faithful servants enter ye into the joy of your Lord,—"

Let these solemn and joyful reflections likewise be addressed in a special manner to the Candidate Elect.

Dear Sir——May these exhortations which we receive as agreeable to the mind of Christ sink down into your ears. This day you are solemnly to be separated to the gospel ministry by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Eternal will be the consequences of this transaction. It is taken for granted you have already resolved to follow the example contemplated at this time; but

a resolution in your own strength is not sufficient. *Resolve in the strength of Christ.* Be exhorted to look well to your own heart. *Have you not felt the bitterness of enticing words in your own experience?* Shun these as you would death.—Should you now fall into their use, in dealing with perishing souls, after such awakening admonitions as God has given you, *your condemnation* will be great. But, in gratitude to Him who brings back his wandering sheep, and is now giving you an opportunity to speak in his name, *be persuaded to act the part of our apostle faithfully.* With his animating example before you, *enter into the life and spirit of it.*—Let the apostles character be *seen in you*—in your preaching—your ardour for the good of souls, and resolution to fulfil the testimony of God. In order to this you must be a man of prayer—you must be daily anointed from on high, and baptised with the Holy Ghost. You must resign every worldly concern, honor, or pleasure which interferes with the *holy skill* of preaching, in demonstration of the spirit and of power. And finally, think not your life dear unto yourself, if you may finish your course with joy, and the ministry you have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God—And be thou faithful unto the death, and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, thou shalt receive a crown of life which shall not fade away.

To the church and people of this society.

Are you desirous that the great Head of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ should place a light in this candlestick? The transactions of this day *manifest* this desire.—But what will be the consequences of the gospel's being preached to you in demonstration of the spirit and of power?

You will have every excuse *for not becoming holy* wrested from your hands—You will have every excuse for not appearing on the right hand of the Judge at the last day, taken from you—and you will have every *delusive plea for sinking down in eternal misery,*
vanish

vanish from your sight. While the gospel shines around you, like the blaze of light, around the apostle at his conversion, will you *like him be convicted and converted*? Will you yield *your whole souls to Christ* and make him your portion? If you do this how happy will be the consequences—You will have eternal reason to bless God for the light he has bestowed, and the power of his spirit which has made it effectual to your salvation. But how alarming is the light of the gospel to such as resist its beams and influence? To them it is a favour of death unto death!! “It had been better for them; said another apostle; not to have known the way of righteousness than after they had known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.” Guilt and punishment ever increase in proportion to means resisted and overcome—You cannot now sin at so cheap a rate as before—raised to Heaven in point of privileges, you will only sink deeper in eternal woe. O be entreated to consider that the very design of preaching the gospel in demonstration of the spirit and power is for your best good, and there is *no alternative, you must be convicted and converted, or be damned to all eternity!* Be exhorted therefore in the language of this apostle, “Not to receive the grace of God in vain. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.” Delay not a moment—fly from the wrath which is coming—embrace the Saviour. O think if once you are imprisoned in the burning pit, God himself will be unto you a “consuming fire”—and the tempest of his wrath will beat upon you forever!—O sinner, O unbeliever *do put on as much consideration as the Father of lies, and tremble for yourselves.* To tremble now may be your life. O be exhorted to lay aside your false hopes of Heaven—your forbidden pleasures and amusements. Seize the present moment as it flies. You detest the criminal who while he waits his execution sells his body—provides the intoxicating potion—and stupifies his

his senses till the fatal moment ! Do not outdo him in enormity ! Do not now sell your precious time, and drown your never dying souls, in stupifying pleasures till the pit awakes you, and Heaven's door is barred !! Your souls are too precious, infinitely too precious to be thrown away in this manner. Do be entreated to realize their worth, and not trifle while eternal happiness or woe, hangs on the present moment. O hear the glad tidings of salvation before it is too late. Trample not the blood of the Saviour under foot, "least he be angry and ye perish from the way." Defer not—make a total surrender of your hearts to him. And let one and all hear, so that our souls may live—"The spirit and the bride say come—and let him that heareth say come—and let him that is athirst come, and take of the water of life freely." And whosoever now shall approach the streams of divine consolation found in the gospel, and taste their excellence shall never die : they shall begin the relish of original life and pleasure here, and continue to follow back those streams till they arrive at the infinite fountain in the presence of God, where they shall live to refresh their souls with greater and greater draughts of divine felicity through eternity.



FINIS.



A P P E N D I X.

SAG-HARBOUR is a sea-port lying at the east end of Long-Island. Has an excellent harbor, wharves, &c.—and is finely situated for trade and navigation—Before the late war, the town was thinly inhabited. Those who tarried through that unnatural contest, suffered greatly in every interest and feeling from the ravages of the enemy—But since the establishment of peace they have increased rapidly, and business of every kind flourishes. At present the place contains nearly one hundred dwelling houses, and one hundred and fifty families—The society was incorporated in the year 1790, about which time a happy revival of religion took place, and a congregational church was organized the year following. The people early erected an house for public worship, and obtained occasional preaching. But were not happy enough, to enjoy the stated administrations of the gospel till May, 1796, when Mr. Daniel Hall, by application, preached among them. And finding his labors acceptable, and promising much spiritual benefit proceeded to invite him to settle among them as their Pastor—After his acceptance of their invitation, and other preparatory measures, he was ordained by the convened Presbytery Sept. 21st 1797.

Sagg-Harbour, November 5th, 1797.

XX

APPENDIX

SAG HARBOR is a sea port lying at the east end of Long Island. Has an excellent harbor. It is a fine place for trade and navigation. Before the late war, the town was very much improved. Those who turned through that natural course, suffered greatly in every interest and feeling from the ravages of the enemy. But since the establishment of peace they have increased rapidly, and business of every kind flourishes. At present the place contains nearly one hundred dwellings, and one hundred and fifty families. The town was incorporated in the year 1790, about which time a happy and successful meeting, and a congregational church was organized the year following. The church was organized on a basis for public worship, and a national school. It was not happy and successful in the first years of its existence. At this time, however, when Mr. Daniel Hall, of New York, presided among them. And the church has labored and prospering much spiritual benefit proceeded to invite to settle among them as their Pastor. After his acceptance of their invitation, and other preparatory measures, he was ordained by the convention, January 2nd, 1807.



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